

## **MISSISSIPPI RIVER FORUM**

**Friday, April 22, 2011**

**8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.**

**Science Museum of Minnesota—Argon Room  
120 West Kellogg Boulevard, St. Paul, MN 55102**

**7:45-8:30      Registration and Continental Breakfast**

**8:30              Welcoming Remarks**

**8:45-9:30      The Mississippi River: Water Quality Trends Over 30 Years**

Thirty-year, long-term water quality data (1976-2005) collected by the Metropolitan Council on the Mississippi River were used to evaluate spatial, seasonal, and long-term concentration and loading trends. Over the period of record, spatial trends were driven largely by nonpoint source inputs from the Minnesota River and, to a lesser extent, by point source inputs from wastewater treatment facilities. Seasonal trends were generally related to hydrologic patterns. Changes in dissolved oxygen, phosphorus, and ammonia appeared strongly linked to improved wastewater treatment practices that reduced oxygen demand and phosphorus and ammonia concentrations. Recent monitoring begun by the National Park Service will help to fill in spatial gaps, contribute to this valuable long-term dataset, and evaluate changes in variables of management interest locally (e.g., phosphorus) and nationally (e.g., nitrate).

*Brenda Moraska Lafrancois. National Park Service.*

*David VanderMeulen. National Park Service.*

**9:30-9:45      Break**

**9:45-10:30    Ecosystem Service Payments: Conservation Marketplace of Minnesota**

Ecosystem services are quantifiable “nature’s benefits” that are recognized by society: clean water, flood control, wildlife habitat, and recreation. Conservation Marketplace of Minnesota (CMM), created in 2008, oversees voluntary ecosystem market transactions. Businesses, corporations, conservation groups, or other entities can make payments to landowners to implement ecosystem service projects. For example, a corporation may pay a landowner to plant trees to reduce its carbon footprint. An interest group pays for habitat enhancements or hunting leases on private land. A municipality may protect its drinking water source by paying landowners to implement best management practices in critical wellhead protection zones.

CMM is a collaboration of conservation professionals providing technical and administrative services for these emerging environmental markets. CMM is currently connecting buyers and sellers of ecosystem service credits in three watersheds: the Greater Blue Earth River, the Middle/Lower Minnesota River, and the Sauk River. CMM promotes the benefits of best management practices on vulnerable lands for improved water and soil conditions. Come learn what this project is doing in watersheds around the state.

*Susie Carlin. Minnesota River Board.*

**10:30-11:15      Trapped by History? Where do we go from Here?**

Since the early settlers raised the first feeble levees, since the Corps of Engineers first placed navigation structures in the Mississippi River, and since biologists first seeded the river's floodplains with species more amenable to human needs, the natural river has become increasingly an artifact. Each action has required reactions that define each subsequent move. Regardless of its purpose, has each action raised a bar that now forms a hydraulic trap from which the river cannot escape? Are all our efforts at ecosystem restoration so constrained by what has been handed down that they have little chance of truly making a meaningful difference?

*John Anfinson. National Park Service.*

**11:15-11:45      Break**

**11:45-12:30      Keynote Address: Commissioner Tom Landwehr, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources**

Tom Landwehr was appointed as Commissioner of the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) by Governor Dayton in January. Commissioner Landwehr began his career at DNR in the early 1980's as a research biologist, and moved on to serve as Wildlife Manager for over five years and as the Wetland Wildlife Program Leader for nearly 10. After leaving the DNR, he was State Conservation Director for Ducks Unlimited in Minnesota and Iowa, and most recently served as Assistant State Director for The Nature Conservancy in Minnesota, North Dakota and South Dakota. He served on the Shoreview City Council from 1995 to 2002. Commissioner Landwehr has an MS in Wildlife Management from the University of Minnesota and an MBA from the Carlson School of Management. He enjoys hunting, fishing, canoeing, camping and boating.

We are honored that Commissioner Landwehr will be with us to discuss his vision of the DNR's role, under his leadership, in helping to manage and improve the Mississippi.

**12:30                      Closing Remarks**

*Lark Weller. Water Quality Coordinator, Mississippi National River and Recreation Area.*

***This event has been brought to you by the National Park Service  
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